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Výuka anglického jazyka v alternativních vzdělávacích programech

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Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá rozdíly ve výuce anglického jazyka v českých školách. Zaměřuje se na běžnou základní školu, Montessori a Waldorfskou školu. Teoretická část popisuje pojem alternativní školy a principy Montessori a Waldorfské školy. Pro snadnější pochopení praktické části jsou zde popsány kurikula pro výuku anglického jazyka obou alternativních principů. Praktická část se pomocí kvalitativního výzkumu zabývá rozhovorem s vyučujícími anglického jazyka z pozorovaných tříd. Důležitou částí výzkumu jsou hospitace na českých školách, které jsou zaměřeny na tři aspekty při výuce anglického jazyka. Cílem bakalářské práce je na základě teorie, rozhovoru s vyučujícími a hospitací vystihnout rozdíly v metodách vyučování anglického jazyka v Montessori škole, Waldorfské škole a běžné základní škole v České Republice.

Klíčová slova: výuka anglického jazyka, alternativní školy, metody vyučování, české školy

Annotation

This bachelor thesis considers the differences in teaching English in the Czech Republic. It focuses on public schools, Montessori schools and Waldorf schools. The section on theory describes the concept of alternative schools and principles of Montessori and Waldorf schools. To ensure a better understanding of the part on practical applications, the curriculums for teaching English for both alternative approaches are described. The practical applications part was created using qualitative research, which is divided into interviews with teachers and observations of English lessons. The research was done in Czech schools, and the observations are focused on three different aspects of teaching English. The goal of this bachelor thesis is to point out the differences in teaching methods for English in Montessori schools, Waldorf schools and public schools by means of theory, interview and observations.

Key words: teaching English language, alternative schools, teaching methods, Czech schools

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Introduction

The target of this bachelor thesis is to present the main differences of different educational approaches in language teaching. From my point of view, in the Czech Republic is a lack of resources where it is pointed out. The purpose of this work is to inform the public about this topic. As the English language is one of the most important subjects nowadays, the thesis is focused on the English language classes in Montessori schools, Waldorf schools and public schools.

It is believed that the public education in the Czech Republic has certain imperfections; therefore, a lot of new educational approaches from different countries have been introduced in the last century. The principles of alternative approaches are usually different from the approaches in regular schools. Nowadays, parents have a great variety of choice while looking for the best education for their children. However, due to the lack of information, parents tend to be suspicious about alternative approaches. The lack of information is the reason why the alternative education is still not a standard in Czech Republic as well. The next possible distrust of parents is that not every teacher in alternative school is experienced enough.

Every education has advantages and disadvantages, strengths or weaknesses. It is also the approach how children learnt what makes the education possibilities various. While working on this research, I came across different opinions about alternative education. People usually admitted they do not know much about it, but they still did not have an optimistic attitude while expressing themselves about alternative education. The lack of information about different approaches of the schools principles in the Czech society can easily make parents doubt about the huge dissimilarities from the public elementary education. Therefore, parents who are not satisfied with the principles of the regular schools, put their children there anyway.

The theoretical part of the bachelor thesis consists of three main chapters. The first chapter describes alternative schools in general and the other two chapters are focused on Montessori and Waldorf principles. The second part of the bachelor thesis focuses on the research in the schools in Czech Republic and the interviews with the teachers who teach in the classes which are a subject of the research. The main focus of the observation is the teacher's usage of English in teaching, the chosen teaching method and the focus on the phonetic aspects of the language during the classes.

Part 1: Theory

1 The Concept of Alternative schools

Alternative schools are the result of criticism of the public educational system, which is why they are considered to be reformatory schools. They distinguish themselves from traditional education programmes in many ways. They have completely or partly different teaching content, teaching methods, organization of educational life and collaboration with parents (Schaub and Zenke 2000, 28 quoted in Průcha 2012, 22).

The concept of an alternative education can differ from one country to another. Therefore, the terms describing alternative education can vary in many ways depending on the location of the alternative school. For example in the USA, the term alternative school means any kind of innovation in public or private schools. On the other hand, in the Czech Republic, the term alternative school is perceived more as a private school (Průcha 2012, 22).

Průcha (2012, 22-23) claims that it is necessary to distinguish three definitions of alternative schools because of their use. It is possible to consider them from a school-political perspective, from an economic perspective, and from a pedagogical and didactic point of view.

The first, the school-political perspective, concerns the differences between public and private or non-governmental schools. Public schools are established by the community, a provincial council, or ministry. Private schools are established by non-public representative bodies. Secondly, the economic aspect defines schools according to their financing. Public schools are financed by the state whereas private schools are partly or completely financed by their investor and parents who have to pay some

school fees. Though exceptionally in some countries, as well as in the Czech Republic, private schools can be partly financed by the state (Průcha 2012, 23-24).

Finally, from the pedagogical and didactic point of view, all schools that use unusual, non-standard or other didactic methods can be termed alternative schools. If this third aspect is considered to be the most relevant, every public or private school using methods which are beyond the traditional education system could be thought of as an alternative school (Průcha 2012, 24-25).

1.1 The Formation and Development of Alternative Schools

Reformative pedagogical movements and theories have had an impact on the formation of alternative schools. The era of pedagogical reform began at the beginning of the 20th century and is mainly associated with names of reforming pedagogues like J. Dewey, M. Montessori, P. Petersen, C. Freinet, R. Steiner and others. Alternative education systems began to form owing to the constant effort of civilization to change and improve things which had already been invented like theories, working procedures, human work and, in the same way, education institutions. As some types of education began to stabilize, people tended to begin changing this situation as well (Průcha 2012, 34).

1.2 Characterization of Alternative Schools

It is almost impossible to characterize these kinds of schools as a single unit because every one of them is very specific in its approach and has its own character. Klassen, Skiera and Wächter made an attempt to characterize them as a whole from a pedagogical and didactic perspective (Průcha 2012, 38-39).

According to Klassen, Skiera and Wächter (1990, Vorwort, vii-viii quoted in Průcha 2012, 38-39) there are five different ways alternative schools that can be characterized.

Firstly, the alternative is a school oriented towards the child. The education is focused towards the child's personality and all the educational activities matched to its individual qualities. Secondly, these schools are active. They apply some of the education methods like conversation, group work, individual work or the project method. According to them, creativity and physical development are very important parts of the educational process (Klassen, Skiera and Wächter 1990, Vorwort, vii-viii quoted in Průcha 2012, 38-39).

The next characteristic is the fact that in alternative schools, children are preferably educated in a holistic way. They not only place importance on the intellectual education of children, but also on social and emotional development. Community is what alternative schools are about, so the educational forms and methods are created together with the teachers, pupils and parents. "The last point is that the alternative school is understood to be "Par la vie -pour la vie." which means learning "from life for life". The aim of education is the involvement of pupils in the world of employment and to widen the educational surroundings so it is not only about school classes" ¹(Klassen, Skiera and Wächter 1990, Vorwort, vii-viii quoted in Průcha 2012, 38-39; my translation).

Průcha (2012, 40) writes that the characterization according to Klassen, Skiera, and Wächter is very general, and the characteristics are, in most cases, similar to the characteristics of public schools. He also claims that alternative schools should be

¹ „Alternativní škola je chápána podle principu „Par la vie – pour la vie“. Míjí se tím učení „z života pro život“, tj. cílem školního vzdělávání je zapojení žáků do světa práce a úsilí o rozšíření edukačního prostředí nad rámec školní třídy.“

characterized not only from the point of view of what they are like, but also based upon the purpose they are created for and the result of their work.

1.3 Functions of alternative schools

Průcha (2012, 41-42) named three functions of alternative schools: compensative function, diversifying function and innovative function.

Public schools may show certain signs of imperfection. Therefore, compensative function indicates that alternative schools are created in order to replace them. People have individual opinions and needs, so it may be impossible for public education to accommodate all the needs of society (Průcha 2012, 41).

According to diversifying function is the public school system always rather monotonous. This should certainly not be considered as a negative because public schools require monotony to a certain extent. When large groups of people are educated, there has to be some standards, some regularity that connect them. Alternative schools are created to break this standard, and together with public education, they create a wider range of educational institutions (Průcha 2012, 41).

Průcha claims that innovative function is the most important because alternative schools offer freedom for experimenting with various sorts of educational innovations. There are many kinds of innovations, but mostly they relate to non-standard teaching methods and non-standard educational content (Průcha 2012, 41-42).

2 Waldorf School

The Waldorf school was established in 1919 in Stuttgart, Germany. It is based on Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy which deals with child development, its skills, and relationship to the world (Waldorfské školy 2008).

2.1 Rudolf Steiner

Rudolf Steiner was born in 1861 in what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 177). He was fascinated by the German author Johan Wolfgang von Goethe from the classical period. It was not Goethe's literature that influenced Steiner's work and thinking, but his scientific, natural and philosophical findings. He helped him to understand the questions of nature and the universe (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 183).

After he graduated as a doctor in philosophy in 1892, he was busy with theosophy on which he worked together with Marie von Sievers. He made efforts to expand theosophy in Germany and Prague, and two years later he published a book named *Theosophy*. He married Marie von Sievers, and during the first world war began to deal with anthroposophy and worked on the basis for the Waldorf school. Owing to Emil Molt, who was interested in Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy, the Waldorf school was created in Stuttgart. Rudolf Steiner was its principal till 1925 (Váňa 1994, 55-61 quoted in Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 178-9).

After the establishment of the Waldorf school, he gave lectures in Germany, Switzerland and the Czech Republic and wrote articles dealing with Waldorf schools (Steiner and Zdražil 2014, 7-8). He gave lectures to the future teachers and supporters of the Waldorf school and anthroposophy. He spoke about the upper, spiritual, world

and his ideas about the world we live in. The lectures were based on questions from his audience which he answered, because he did not prepare his lectures in advance (Steiner, Hudeček and Dostal 2003, 14-16).

Prague was one of the relevant centres of theological and anthroposophical thinking. Steiner visited Prague very often as he gave lectures there. He and his lectures surely contributed to the original and spiritual atmosphere of the city. He died in Switzerland in 1925 (Váňa 1994, 55-61 quoted in Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 179-181).

2.2 The Waldorf School in Stuttgart

The first Waldorf school was opened in Stuttgart one year after the end of the First World War, on 7th September 1919. At that time there were 12 teachers and 256 pupils (Steiner and Zdražil 2014, 12).

Europe was going through very hard economic and social problems. Therefore, the purpose of creating the Waldorf school was to regenerate the spiritual life, which could help the desperate situation of those times, and create a pedagogical direction which would correspond with human necessities and interests (Waldorfská škola České Budějovice 2019).

Rudolf Steiner created this school together with Emil Molt, who was the owner of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory at that time. The school was named after this factory because the first pupils were children of the workers from the factory and also children from different social classes (Steiner and Zdražil 2014, 51). Emil Molt was a supporter of Steiner's theosophical teaching and his aim was to put Steiner's theories into practice. His intention was to connect the spirit and materialism of that time in order to bring out the children's strength and skills which they would need in life and

to create a strong life support mechanism for them as well (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 179).

Steiner determined three seven-year development phases of a child. The first phase, which is from birth to seven years, is about the development of the body. In this phase, the child learns with the help of imitating so it is very important for his parents and teachers to be perfect examples. The second phase lasts to their 14th year when the child is ready to attend school classes. In this phase, the memory is being developed but not yet abstract thinking. In the third phase, from 14 years to 21 years, abstract thinking, sentiment, personal values and attitude develop (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 180).

2.3 Anthroposophical Pedagogy

The intention of anthroposophy, which was invented by Rudolf Steiner, is to look at the world in a way that allows it to be used in art and education. Its knowledge of people is not only based on the observation of human beings, but also deals with their spiritual side (Steiner and Zdražil 2014, 55). It perceives people as beings that consist of a body, spirit and soul. According to Steiner, anthroposophy did not only refer to philosophy, but also to the pedagogy, medicine, theology and social sciences (Baumann 1999, 22-24 quoted in Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 177).

Anthroposophical pedagogy develops pupils physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally, and opens them up to other spiritual worlds. However, it not only develops pupils thinking, but also their speech, art and motor activity (An important part of a Waldorf schools study plan consists of work with colours, painting, dance, music and theatre.). Anthroposophy does not build content for the study plan of Waldorf schools, but it determines the teachers' perspective with regard to the

pupils and this forms the basis of the curriculum and teaching methods (Pol 1995, 11-12 quoted in Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 185-6).

2.4 Eurythmy

Eurythmy is a form of movement art that was also invented by Rudolf Steiner. In 1911, still before the first Waldorf school was opened, the first Eurythmy classes began in Germany. The aim of this movement art is to reveal the deep connections between the body, soul and spiritual relationships. The origin of the name is Greek and means “beautiful rhythm”. At first sight it resembles a dance. However, the moves follow talking or music. Eurythmy supports the balance of the human body, helps to teach how to put one’s decisions into practise and to improve expression. Not only does eurythmy teach children better orientation in space, but also to feel the rhythm and melody better. What’s more, they gain a sense of language and oral expression (Eurytmie, n.d.).

2.5 The Current Waldorf School

Children attend this school for twelve years. If they want to graduate, they have to attend the Waldorf school for thirteen years. In order to provide education for children of all social classes, this school is public. It means that all educational standards of the school ministry are fulfilled and parents do not have to pay any school fees. It perceives education as a developmental process in which education is set up in specific phases of the individual development of a child. The lesson plans are prepared to be suitable for the development of a child’s skills. To make this individual modification possible, the pupils have the same class teacher from the first to the ninth

grade. The class teacher has to teach all the main subjects such as mathematics, history and the native language (Waldorfské školy 2008).

The educational program of Waldorf schools is specific in its offer of minor subjects, which have to provide for the general development of a child and show that children's abilities and talents vary a greatly. For instance, they are taught how to knit, to weave, or to work in the garden. To acquire the general foundation, all subjects are compulsory till the ninth class. Boys have to go to knitting classes and girls have to learn woodwork. In Waldorf's educational method rhythm, expression and movement are very important. Therefore, many movement activities are part of the lesson plan. One of the most important subjects is eurythmy, which is compulsory for the whole school attendance and is even integrated into the daily schedule/timetable. Pupils' results are not graded, but they are assessed in oral or written forms which should include all the children's strengths and weaknesses. A lesson, or epoch, is separated into a teaching triad. The teaching begins with some practice or song which, if possible, is not changed for the whole year, and in other grades the words or moves are altered depending on the pupils age and interest. This practice is usually very short as the usual class follows. Then, at the end of the class, a discussion takes place which means that pupils discuss the subject matter or let the teacher narrate to them (Waldorfské školy 2008).

The major subjects are taught in epochs. One epoch consists of two teaching blocks every morning. Every morning one topic has to be dealt with for about one month, and then the topic is changed to something else. All this enables the subject matter to be worked through in a more intensive way, to experience and understand the context and current topic. As the epoch ends, the specialized teachers take over, teaching in the usual lesson style. The teaching should not be based on coursebooks

because the materials are created by the teachers themselves in cooperation with their pupils or colleagues. Books can be used as a supplement, but they should not be taken as the main teaching medium (Waldorfské školy 2008).

Pupils create their own epoch notebooks which should replace coursebooks. As stated above, the teacher directs the lesson to the developmental needs of his/her pupils. Owing to this, the teacher has great freedom in creating the lesson plans (Waldorfské školy 2008).

After twelve years pupils receive an apprenticeship certificate which contains the written assessment of their last four years. If pupils are interested in passing the graduation exam, they can enter the thirteenth year which is based on the educational methods of grammar schools in order to ensure the comparability of results (Bund der freien Waldorfschulen, n.d.).

3 Montessori

This very significant form of education was established at the beginning of the 20th century. Maria Montessori originally intended her educational methods for disabled children. As she quickly gained considerable success, she utilized her methods for healthy children. Her pedagogy put emphasis on the freedom of the child, special didactic material and the environment around it (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 130-131).

3.1 Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was born in 1870 in Ancona Province in Italy. At the age of five, her family moved to Rome where she spent many years of her life. She became the first woman in Italy to obtain a medical degree, but she was also actively interested in subjects such as pedagogy, psychology and philosophy. After her studies, she worked as an assistant at the University of Rome as well as a paediatrician. At the university she began to be engaged with the treatment of special needs children and continued in this line for several more years (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 130).

In 1907, Montessori opened the first children's house (Casa dei Bambini), where she started to study children without any disabilities. As she took care of 50 children from the dirty streets of Rome, she was positively surprised by what the children were capable of. The news of her successful work spread very quickly around the world and people began to visit Casa dei Bambini in order to see the children for themselves (Montessori, n.d.). Between the First and Second World Wars, her pedagogy spread into other parts of Europe and the Association Montessori Internationale was established. Because of her antifascist views, she had to leave Italy during World War II. She moved to India where she continued her work and developed a lot of new ideas that are used in Montessori education today (Montessori, n.d.). She

was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950 and died in the Netherlands in 1952, where she lived after the Second World War (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 131). Montessori was working on the Montessori education for almost 50 years and extended it for pupils to age 12. She worked on Montessori methods for adolescents, but she did not manage to finish it (Lillard 2013, 159).

3.2 The principles behind Montessori's

Montessori made efforts to offer children freedom, to help them with developing their skills and abilities and to develop their personality. The special didactic material and suitable educational environment are supposed to offer the child a chance to achieve the highest development of its own potential while pursuing its own activities. Thus the environment, which should offer an adequate amount of stimulus to keep their development healthy, has a big role in the development of a child. In contrast to other educational systems, the role of a teacher is neither to form the child nor to offer it complete freedom. The teacher is supposed to create suitable situations for the development of a child (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 131).

Montessori claims that a teacher is the major connector between the learning material and the child. Most importantly, the teacher's task is to introduce the use of the learning material. After that, the teacher should observe the children carefully, assist them when they need to, or identify the right time when to speak to children or when they need silence (Montessori 1973, 150).

Montessori named four sensitive periods of human development. She divided them up this way because particular abilities may be obtained during particular periods. If they are not obtained in a particular period, the opportunity for the most

effective development of particular abilities passes by. The sensitive periods are described in the following paragraphs (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 132).

3.3 Sensitive Periods in Human Development

1. 0-3 years

At this age, movement, speech and routine are the most sensitive. A child has to be able to walk, run and use manual skills. Of course, while developing speech is also very important at this age, they need to evolve an understanding for regular routines.

2. 3-6 years

Owing to the experience gained from activities, the child begins to feel itself to be a member of a group and it comes into a consciousness of the self. Movement and speech is still developing.

3. 7-12 years

At this age, children are very sensitive to the moral aspect. They begin to distinguish between good and bad. They obtain more social experience which, if this fails to happen at this time, could cause difficulties in the next stages of their development. Thinking is developing slowly from the objective reality to abstraction.

4. 12-18 years

In this period, the individual improves his ability to be independent in social relationships and their own reflection of themselves. This description of sensitive periods of human development is supported by the definition of Rýdl (1999, 48 quoted in Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 132).

3.4 Prepared Environment

As previously mentioned, the prepared environment is the basis for the healthy and free development of a child. It should include special learning material as well as professionally trained teachers. According to Montessori, the school desk should not be untidy or overfilled to prevent children from losing attention. Children should only work with one learning material at a time and tidy it up before choosing another one. Learning materials should be very simple and created so that children can use them. The learning material should also offer children feedback by itself, so if they make mistakes they can easily correct themselves. In Montessori, correction from pupils working together is also very important because they can warn or school each other. Thus, the checking for errors is a very important principle, the purpose of which is to develop pupils' independence (Zelinková 1997, 67 quoted in Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 137-8).

Montessori incorporates ordinary daily activities such as sweeping, cleaning, closing and opening doors and folding the washing into the education program. To avoid endangering the health of children, and to match the height of the furniture with the figure of a child, special furniture and aids were made. She also incorporated many other activities into the classes. The most frequent of these was walking on an ellipse, when pupils have to walk punctually on a line, sometimes with some tools like a glass of water to make it harder. The purpose of this exercise was to develop concentration, attention and self-discipline (Zelinková 1997, 67 quoted in Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 137-8).

3.5 Current Montessori Approaches

For Montessori education to be most effective, it is very helpful if a child has already attended Montessori kindergarten. The kindergarten materials and methodology are related to materials and methodology used in school. It follows that the children, who are used to traditional education, for example to punishments, rewards and marks, cannot benefit from Montessori to the same extent as children who have already attended Montessori kindergarten and could be happier in traditional school (alternativní školy 2019).

The classes are divided into mixed age groups so first, second and third grade pupils have classes together. Then pupils from fourth to sixth grade and, later, seventh, eighth and ninth grade pupils, are in one class. But music, drama and sports classes are not divided like this. Pupils usually have it together (alternativní školy 2019). The structure of mixed-age groups enables pupils to work individually at their own level and to learn to socialize with classmates of different ages. This unique approach to education helps to develop their cooperation skills, imitative learning or peer tutoring (Montessori academy 2017).

The Montessori classroom is intentionally designed in order to arouse interest in young pupils. It should encourage them to explore and to learn with a joy, to develop their independence and sociable abilities. The classroom should also be beautiful and inviting so the pupils as well as the teachers feel safe, and that they belong together. The class is not filled with the usual toys, but with naturally-made learning materials (Montessori academy 2017). The class is divided into sections. Every section has furniture that can be easily accessed, and on the shelves, there are various learning materials that are arranged according to their specialization, such as mother language, mathematics and cosmic block (alternativní školy 2019). The desks are not directed

toward a blackboard as in traditional public schools, there is actually no focus point. The desks are arranged so the pupils can work individually or in groups (Montessori academy 2017).

Every day begins with a conversation on the ellipse, where they talk about news or play some games. After this, a teacher helps pupils choose their next activity. A teacher's task is to arrange the environment and teaching material in the way that after helping the pupils choose their activity, his job is to observe and help only the pupils who need it (alternativní školy 2019). The classes should be divided into two blocks that last 90 minutes and pupils should have a 30 minutes break between them. What also makes this school different from a usual public school is that the blocks do not start and end with a bell. In order to express pupil assessments in a better way, there are no marks but verbal assessments. Pupils also should not be compared with their classmates, but with their previous output (ZŠ Spalov 2014).

4 Curriculum of Montessori for English language

Mgr. Minsterová says that Montessori in the Czech Republic does not have any official lesson plan for teaching English. She also says that there is a curriculum for English native speakers, but it is not practicable in the Czech Republic, where pupils have English as a foreign language. Therefore, Montessori schools in the Czech Republic could use very dissimilar methods (Mgr. Martina Minsterová, Personal correspondence, March 25, 2019).

As every school has to have a Framework educational program, the Montessori 5. Května in Liberec includes a short summary of skills that pupils should acquire in first five years of school. As the classes contain mix-aged groups, they divided their aims into just two parts. From the first to the third school year, pupils should be able to pronounce the vocabulary they learn correctly. They should be able to understand and respond to easy sentences (They should know basic phrases, easy instructions and questions.). Pupils should also have the ability to distinguish the written and the spoken word and be able to use an easy dictionary. They should understand the content and meaning of a slow and easy dialogue. Pupils should learn the vocabulary of some basic topics, such as the family, house and daily activities. They should read short texts and understand easy listening exercises (ZŠ Liberec, ulice 5. Května 2018).

From the fourth to the fifth year of school, pupils should be able to understand well-known vocabulary from the topic they are learning, as well as the content of an easy text they are working with. As long as there is an easy text with known vocabulary, pupils should read it fluently with correct pronunciation and look for information they need without any problems. They should be able to write easy sentences correctly and fill in their personal details onto a form. They should also be able to actively communicate in ordinary daily situations. The learning material

teachers prepare for the classes are cards, dictionaries and a CD player with headphones. The cards are divided according to their use, for example practicing vocabulary on a particular topic or cards with texts and pictures that help to compile the time sequence (ZŠ Liberec, ulice 5. Května 2018).

5 Curriculum of Waldorf schools for English language

In the first grade, games have a very important role in teaching English, because pupils are fully absorbed in the language activity that is connected to the games or storytelling, which help them with comprehension. In the first year of school, teachers should use recitation and singing, because pupils are very open to these activities. The curriculum suggests that teachers should use easy instructions in the classes, games that include the repetition of grammar or songs and poems or movement activities. In summary, at the end of the first year, pupils should be able to answer easy questions, and their vocabulary should cover basic colours, body parts, important instructions, numbers to twenty and days of the week and seasons of the year (Richter 2013, 89-90).

In the second year, pupils tend to communicate much more than the year before, so dialogues and asking and answering questions are a relevant part of the classes. The topics from the first year should be extended, for example more alternatives to answer easy questions. Certainly, teachers should include rhythmic recitations, new poems, songs or harder daily situations in classes. Pupils should know how to count to one hundred, answer questions about themselves and their family and listen to easy stories that teacher tells them. Also, they should be able to name all the months and classroom objects in English. As pupils develop intellectually, they need more demanding texts to practice in the third year. Every class should include reciting beautiful poems for exercising artistic speech. A significant part of classes in the third year is the preparation for reading and writing in the following year. It follows that pupils need to learn the text they are going to write carefully. Richter says that pupils should be more aware of using English language than before. It is expected that at the

end of the year they know the basic vocabulary of important topics as food, clothes, furniture and time. They should also actively participate in conversations with the teacher or their classmates. Finally, they should use the most important prepositions correctly and know the most important personal and possessive pronouns (Richter 2013, 90-94).

In the fourth year, the teachers' attitude to pupils is more individual than before, because around the age of 10, a stronger consciousness of the self is developed. There should also be more strict rules in the classes than in previous years and the most relevant topics should be writing and reading. Pupils start to write texts that they memorized in the previous years, which usually simplifies learning words they already know in the written form. When they start reading, the first texts they read are the one they wrote. After that, they should continue reading stories they know already from the previous years. Teachers should not omit singing and recitation, as it still makes up an important part of the classes. At the end of the fourth year, pupils should be able to spell their names and important vocabulary. They should read what they practised in classes correctly and create easy sentences themselves. It is expected that they know verb forms in present simple and are able to distinguish parts of speech. In the fifth year, a pupil's memory is much more developed than before, so they can learn a lot of new things. Teachers should make sure that children joyfully experience the English language classes, which could be supported by their own imagination whenever it is possible. Pupils can recite more complicated poems, which helps them to practise pronunciation and intonation. It is important that poems should be learned by repeating them from the teacher, because pupils should hear the vocabulary before they read it. As they widen their vocabulary, they start to write short stories in order to remember the new words and to develop their creativity. As in the fifth year a lot of new grammar

is explained, the teacher is supposed to explain it in pupils' mother language. It is recommended to use an extra notebook for grammar that pupils can use in the following years too. In summary, at the end of the fifth year, pupils should be able to recognize basic differences in sentence structure between English and their mother language. They should answer reading comprehension questions, re-tell short stories and finally, they should be able to use present, past and future simple tense of well-known verbs (Richter 2013, 89-94).

Part 2: Practical applications

6 The aim of Part 2

The purpose of this research was to discover and compare the differences of the English language teaching methods in Montessori schools, Waldorf schools and public schools in the Czech Republic. The research was done by means of qualitative research. Unlike quantitative research, which is based on one objective, reality that is not connected with emotions, attitudes or convictions, qualitative research is based on the subjective aspects of the observed people and more realities. Rather than achieving a goal, qualitative research is more about understanding the meaning of the research. It may be done in small group of people as uniqueness and empathy represent a very important part of the research (Chráska 2007, 32-33).

This research was done in six schools, and for every educational approach, two schools were observed. The main tasks were observing of English classes and short interviews with teachers. An interview is a method which gathers facts from reality and is based on the conversation between the person being observed and the research worker. It provides a personal contact, which offers the research worker a chance to see the reactions and attitudes of the people being observed in more detail (Chráska 2007, 182).

The observations were focused on three criteria that could possibly differ in all chosen schools. The criteria are the teachers' usage of English, the choice of teaching method and focus on phonetics.

7 The research

The research was done at the Waldorf, Montessori and public schools in the Liberec, Semily and Pilsen regions. In order to ensure a similar level of pupils, English classes from third to fifth year were observed. Nevertheless, the classes were not completely the same owing to the diverse school principles. The classes were either small subgroups or big groups made up of 15 to 22 pupils, and in Montessori in Liberec, the pupils were mixed from the third to the fifth classes.

7.1 Characteristics of the observed schools

1. Waldorfská škola Dobromysl

Mgr. Havelková says that the Waldorfská škola Dobromysl has been located in Pilsen and functioning for five years in its own building. Before that, it was connected with a public school for five years. In this school, every class looks very different as pupils have freedom to decorate it. Some of the observed classes were in an English room, which was a little room with a few desks, a carpet and English materials. However, some observations were made in the pupils' classrooms, which were creatively decorated, very spacious and had always a carpet and sofa at the back of the class. The desks in the English room were not pointed to the blackboard, but were freely situated; however, in the pupils' classrooms, the desks were oriented in the direction of the blackboard. There were not any multimedia-blackboards or computers in the classrooms. The number of pupils in the groups were always around 10, and the classes from third to the fifth grade were observed.

2. Waldorfská škola Semily

According to the teacher Šrámek, the Waldorf school in Semily has been in operation for 20 years. The kindergarten and primary school were opened first, but since 2006, pupils can attend a Waldorf high school, which they finish with a graduation exam. Two classes were observed there. In the first class, pupils from third year had the English lesson in their classroom. It was a little room, which was decorated with just a few pictures the pupils had made. The class consisted of 22 pupils who were a little too noisy, but the teacher could easily calm them down. Just as in the first classroom, the second observed classroom did not have any modern technology in it, and the pupils had to put their phones into a small basket, where they stayed the whole day. The classes were also equipped with special wooden desks, which pupils could tilt when they needed to. The second class was smaller group of pupils in the 5th year. Their classroom was nicely decorated with the things they had made and with some unusual things, for example, wall bars.

3. 26. základní škola Plzeň

The teacher M. said that this very spacious elementary school has been in operation since 1970 and has had a separate workplace in Litice since 1998.

Two classes were observed there, one in the language room and the second in the pupils' classroom. The language room was a bit too small for 17 pupils. It was decorated with maps of England, books and pictures of England, and there was a Multimedia-whiteboard and a computer. The desks were positioned in the direction of the whiteboard. The second observation was

made in the pupils' classroom. The classroom was very spacious and the pupils had all their learning materials there. Desks were oriented in the direction of the multimedia whiteboard, and there was a carpet at the back of the classroom. There were subgroups made up of 17 to 19 pupils.

4. Základní škola 5. Května, školní vzdělávací program Montessori

Mgr. Macháčová claimed that this was not an independent school, but part of the základní škola 5. Května in Liberec. The first Montessori classes were opened in 2014, and from the school year 2019/2020, there is going to be a second class opened.

The observed classes were mixed from second, third and fourth grades. Unlike in public school, the desks were not positioned in the direction of blackboard, but there were desks for one person, two or the whole group arranged freely in the class. Pupils had all the materials they needed in the class, which were distributed according to the subject. In middle of class, there was a big carpet with an ellipse on it, and the whole class was decorated with pictures or learning materials that pupils had made themselves. The other classes were the same.

5. Základní škola Montessori Plzeň

According to Mr Sarka has this school only first grade classes and is part of the Bolevecká základní škola in Pilsen. Even though they only have a small part of the building, they still have a big area. Mr Sarka, English teacher at the Montessori in Pilsen, says that pupils have English lessons thirty minutes every day. He said that pupils have only one subject every day, which they also

have in English for thirty minutes. For example, when they have geography on Mondays, and they also learn the same topic in English. Unlike the Montessori in Liberec, they have English classes in very small groups (from 4 to 8), and the pupils are on the similar level. In this school three observations were made of pupils from the 3., 4. And 5 years. All the classes were in the small English room where they had a table in an elliptical shape in the middle. Mr Sarka said that he had been using National Geographic textbooks, which had been adapted for Montessori.

6. Základní škola Dobřany

Teacher 3 claimed that this school was attended by pupils from the small city Dobřany and from the villages nearby. Teacher 1 says that pupils come from very dissimilar environments, which means that there are children of very different levels in the same class, so it can be sometimes hard to manage. The observations were made in pupils' classrooms and in the room for the after-school club, which should be just a temporary place for English lessons. The classrooms were fully decorated with pupils' pictures or with teaching materials. In all classes, desks were situated in the direction of the whiteboard and there were no computers or multimedia blackboards. There were 14 to 20 pupils in the classes.

7.2 The Interview Questions

The interview contained questions that were intended to offer a short description of the teachers and show their teaching preferences.

7.2.1 Montessori Teachers

Three Montessori teachers were interviewed. The first teacher Mgr. Bára Macháčová has been teaching for two years at the Montessori in Liberec, and has not taught in another school system. Justin Holden, a native English speaker, has taught at the same school as Mgr. Macháčová for five years. The third teacher, Jack Daniel Sarka, who teaches at the Montessori school in Pilsen taught at a Montessori school in Germany before he came to Pilsen.

1. What is the basis of your organization for the school year?

- Mgr. Macháčová said that every school worked differently, because Montessori schools do not have their own curriculum in the Czech Republic. She also said she wished there was some curriculum for Montessori in the Czech Republic, and that she and her colleagues made their own plan that contains everything they would like to cover in a year.
- Mr Holden said that they made their own curriculum according to the school they are part of and according to the students' needs.
- Mr Sarka said he followed his material and the National Geographic textbooks throughout the year, but the classes were also dependent to the needs of his pupils.

2. Do you prefer any specific methods? Which?

- Mgr. Macháčová answered that she preferred the Montessori Methods, which are mainly individual work and directed discussion. She tried to avoid front teaching and competition.

- Mr Holden said that he preferred to let the kids work on what interests them and felt that they learn more by incorporating their own creativity.
- Mr Sarka said he used a lot of illustrations in his classes.

3. Do you find using a textbook in the class important? What for?

- Mgr. Macháčová answered she did not use textbooks in her classes, but she used dictionaries and the Pink Series, which is a Montessori reading method from United Kingdom. She also said she taught according to lesson plans and current topics.
- Mr Holden said that it was not important to use a textbook if it did not help the child. In his experience, he said that it was better and more affective to see what the child's learning style was.
- For Mr Sarka, a textbook is important, because of the grammar and important topics, but he uses it at most two days a week, and the other days works with Montessori material.

4. To which extent do you find communicating with your pupils in English only effective?

- Mgr. Macháčová said it depended on the situation, and it was very individual as the classes are pupils of three different ages mixed together, but it was very important for her to speak English, even though it may be very difficult.
- Mr Holden said that communication in English only was very effective, albeit difficult. Owing to communication in English only, children learn to understand and the correct pronunciation at the same time.

- Mr Sarka thought that it is important to communicate mainly in English with pupils, but there were complicated situations sometimes, which required switching to Czech. Unfortunately, he cannot switch to Czech as he does not speak the language.

5. What is more important for you, the pupils' fluency or accurate pronunciation?

- For Mgr. Macháčová, fluency and accurate pronunciation are both important.
- Mr Holden answered that he preferred to let the children express themselves and after they have communicated what they want to say, then he could work on corrections.
- Mr Sarka said he found fluency more important, because accurate pronunciation needed time and should be taught the same way like babies are taught, which means step by step. If pupils are overwhelmed with corrections of their pronunciation, they lose the motivation to learn.

6. Which methods do you prefer while practicing pronunciation?

- Mgr. Macháčová prefers to use poems and songs to exercise pronunciation.
- Mr Holden prefers to make the pronunciation exercises feel like a game. He also said that it was good for students to make exercises for sounds what they were not used to.

- Mr Sarka said he preferred to teach American English pronunciation, and he taught that by games.

7. Are you completely satisfied with the principles of education system you are teaching in, or is there something you would like to do differently?

- Mgr. Macháčová said that she was satisfied with the system, but they also were working on organisational changes.
- Mr Holden said that he really liked Montessori, because the principles were intuitive and it gave the child a chance to see and correct their own mistakes. He said that there was nothing he would change.
- Mr Sarka answered that he could not say the Montessori principle was perfect, but he tried his best to teach pupils what was most effective for them.

7.2.2 Public school teachers

Five teachers were interviewed. Mgr. Marie Holečková, who teaches at the 26. Základní škola Plzeň, has been teaching for 41 years and, for nine years at this school. She has never taught in any other system than the public school system. The second teacher, Mgr. Blanka M. also teaches at the 26. Základní škola Plzeň, and has been teaching for just one year. Before her graduation, she taught at a kindergarten. The teachers from the Základní škola Dobřany requested that their names not be mentioned so they will be referred to as Teacher 1, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3. They all have university degrees in education for the first school level, or are still studying. Also, they have not taught at any other school than základní škola Dobřany.

1. What is the basis of your organization for the school year?

- Mgr. Holečková teaches according to the curriculum of 26. Základní škola Plzeň and follows the textbook named "*Project*".
- Mgr. M. answered she used a methodical manual and the ideas from her university as her inspiration for teaching.
- Teacher 1 from ZŠ Dobřany has been teaching according to the curriculum, but her classes are also based on the ideas of all the training seminars she has attended.
- Teacher 2 from ZŠ Dobřany said that she taught according to the textbook's organization, and that she tried to teach in a playful way.
- Teacher 3 follows the school curriculum and schoolbooks, but she also finds inspiration from literature and the internet.

2. Do you prefer any specific methods? Which?

- Mgr. Holečková answered that she often used songs and dialogues in her classes. She also uses exercises on the computer.
- Mgr. M. answered she preferred methods from the methodical manual and from the internet.
- Teacher 1 said that her lessons were mostly based on exercises with cards she had made and dialogues. She also said that she tried to avoid front teaching.
- Teacher 2 said she preferred games and exercises.
- Teacher 3 said she preferred the methods of classic education, not alternative education.

3. Do you find using a textbook in the class important? What for?

- Mgr. Holečková claimed that it was important due to the good quality material they offer. She also found the listening in textbooks helpful.
- For Mgr. M., the use of a textbook in the class is important, because the books she uses (Chit Chat) are nicely made and are connected with listening online.
- Teacher 1 says that the use of a textbook is important for her, but it depended on the topic she is teaching and the exercises they offer. She said that she used textbook with younger pupils, but in the fifth year, she used it less than usual.
- Teacher 2 said that the textbook was an inspiration only. She used the songs and articles from the textbook.
- Teacher 3 said it depended on the situation, and that she used the textbook every other class.

4. To which extent do you find the communication with your pupils in English only effective?

- Mgr. Holečková tries to speak English with her pupils, but they are not used to it yet, so she uses the mother language within the boundaries of acceleration.
- For Mgr. M., it is important to speak English as much as possible, but it is not easy with young pupils, because they tend to switch to Czech.

- Teacher 1 answered that her pupils lost concentration while she spoke English, and it was time-consuming too, so she speaks English very little.
- Teacher 2 said that it was important to communicate in English, but it was not possible very much in the fourth class, because the pupils were not used to it, so she spoke more with the older pupils in English.
- Teacher 3 said that she spoke English as much as possible, but she used Czech while explaining grammar and new games.

5. What is more important for you, the pupils' fluency or accurate pronunciation?

- For Mgr. Holečková, the accurate pronunciation is more important, but she always corrects her pupils only after they finish speaking.
- Mgr. M. preferred fluency, because she wanted pupils not to be scared to speak. If they spoke with wrong pronunciation, she repeated the sentence correctly after them.
- Teacher 1 said she paid attention for accurate pronunciation of pupils more than fluency, because pupils did not manage it yet, and the English group was too big.
- Teacher 2 said that fluency was more important, because in the real life, if people speak fluently with incorrect pronunciation, others still understand them.
- Teacher 3 said that fluency was more important for her.

6. Which methods do you prefer for practicing pronunciation?

- Mgr. Holečková practices pronunciation with pupils by listening or making her pupils repeat after her.
- Mgr. M. uses dialogues and games to practice pronunciation.
- Teacher 1 practices pronunciation with the help of drills, and sometimes by changing the voices. For example, her pupils have to speak loudly, whisper or with low-pitched voices.
- Teacher 2 uses the drill from listening exercises and dialogues.
- Teacher 3 preferred phonetic cards and she also used little mirrors while practicing pronunciation.

7. Are you completely satisfied with the principles of education system you are teaching in, or is there something you would like to do differently?

- Mgr. Holečková said that after 41 years of teaching experience, she went through education systems that had a lot of imperfections, but she found the current public school education system much better than it used to be.
- Mgr. M. said that she thought the principles of Czech public schools were well adjusted, but she would add more English in afterschool activities.
- Teacher 1 is satisfied with the principles, because she teaches her own way and claims that it always depends on how the teachers manage their teaching.

- Teacher 2 said she wished the principles were not based on front teaching as much.
- Teacher 3 answered that she was satisfied with the principles of Czech public school.

7.2.3 Waldorf school teachers

Three teachers were interviewed. The first, Mgr. Lenka Havelková, has taught at the Waldorfská škola Dobromysl for three years. Before she started to teach there, she used to teach in private schools only. Alice Hellmichová, who has taught English for four years in this school, taught in England for six years. Mr Jiří Šrámek, who is an English teacher at the Waldorfská škola Semily, studied at a Waldorf seminar in London for a class teacher, and he has taught at the Waldorf school in Semily for 12 years.

1. What is the basis of your organization for the school year?

- Mgr. Havelková answered that she followed the Waldorf educational plan “Richter”, the school curriculum and topic plans.
- Mrs Hellmichová said that she followed the school curriculum.
- Mr Šrámek follows the epoch plan, which he adjusts according to the situation.

2. Do you prefer any specific methods? Which?

- For Mgr. Havelková, it is important to work with cards, because she finds handling real things important. She also prefers to use rhythm poems, daily communication and group work. She says that in the Waldorf school, they focus on the rhythm of English and

comprehension from the first class and begin to write and read more in the fourth class.

- Mrs Hellmichová said that her classes were based on everyday situations and she used a lot of rhythmic exercises.
- Mr Šrámek combines a lot of methods, but he prefers drill with movement, pictures for vocabulary, songs and recitation.

3. Do you find using a textbook in the class important? What for?

- For Mgr. Havelková, the textbook is not important in the class, but she uses it only as an inspiration. She also says that there is no textbook which can be effective to work with for a long time. They do not reflect collective action and do not contain interesting topics.
- Mrs Hellmichová uses many books as resources very often.
- For Mr Šrámek, the textbook is not important, but he uses it only for preparation. He also said that they use the English reading book Robin Hood from the fifth class.

4. To which extent do you find the communication with your pupils in English only effective?

- Mgr. Havelková answered that a teacher should speak English as much as possible, but he should also use the pupils' mother language while explaining grammar. She says that in a Waldorf school, the pupils are aware of grammar explanations from the sixth class, before that the grammar is understood subconsciously.

- For Mrs Hellmichová it is important to speak with her pupils in English only. She hardly ever uses Czech. For example, she speaks Czech at the beginning of the year in order to explain to the pupils what they are going to learn, and in the first year when pupils are starting to learn English.
- Mr Šrámek said that he found out that it was not very effective. He has to repeat everything in Czech in order for the pupils understand him and not to lose too much time.

5. What is more important for you, the pupils' fluency or accurate pronunciation?

- For Mgr. Havelková, fluency and accurate pronunciation are both important, but fluency develops over time, so she focuses more on the pupils' pronunciation.
- Mrs Hellmichová answered that neither fluency nor accurate pronunciation was important to her, because the most important thing about learning a foreign language at a young age was that it has to be entertaining for pupils. When learning is entertaining for them, then fluency and pronunciation are much easier to practice.
- Mr Šrámek said that both fluency and accurate pronunciation was important for him. He lets the pupils finish talking, and then he corrects them.

6. Which methods do you prefer to practice pronunciation?

- Mgr. Havelková prefers poems, songs and tongue-twisters.

- Mrs Hellmichová said that she used songs and poems that are used in English kindergartens for training children to speak correctly.
- Mr Šrámek prefers to use drill exercises with a change of intonation, songs and recitation.

7. Are you completely satisfied with the principles of the education system you are teaching in, or is there something you would like to do differently?

- Mgr. Havelková said she is completely satisfied with Waldorf education.
- Mrs Hellmichová is completely satisfied with the principles of the Waldorf school and would not change anything about it. She also believes that Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf pedagogy, was a great person with an amazing philosophy.
- Mr Šrámek is satisfied with the principles of Waldorf school, because there are just few basic principles and it offers the teacher huge freedom to adapt the methods according to the class's needs.

7.3 Summary of the interviews

The interviews with the teachers showed very different opinions on the basic aspects of teaching a foreign language. In both Montessori schools, the teachers said that they followed the needs of their pupils throughout the year and taught according to the school curriculum of the school they were part of. They also said that in contrast to other countries, the Czech Republic did not have a Montessori plan for teaching English. Almost all the public school teachers answered that they teach according to the school curriculum and the textbooks. The teachers from the Waldorf school said

they also taught according to the curriculum, but one answered that she followed the Waldorf curriculum, which is focused on teaching English.

When responding to the question if the teachers prefer any specific methods, the answers of Montessori teachers corresponded to the Montessori principles. The teachers preferred individual work and the use of illustrations. The answers of the teachers of the Waldorf school corresponded as well, that their classes should be based on rhythmic exercises, songs and poems in the first grade. On the other hand, the public school teachers had very different answers, for example, exercises on the computer, vocabulary cards, or didactic games.

The third question, which was about the usage of textbooks in the classes, showed the differences in the educational approaches. Almost every public school teacher answered that the textbook is important for her. The Waldorf teachers found inspiration from the schoolbooks, textbooks and other literature. Montessori does not have any strict rules about the English teaching. The Montessori teachers in Liberec did not find the book important, because they do not use them, and in the Montessori in Pilsen, the teacher said he used a textbook twice a week.

In the fourth question, the teachers were asked about communication in English in their classes. The majority of them answered that they use English as much as possible, but they resolve difficult situations in Czech. A surprising answer came from the public school teachers, who claimed that speaking English during the lesson was not effective as the pupils did not understand her and got confused, so she used English very little.

The answers to the fifth question were very different as the teachers chose a preference for either fluency or accurate pronunciation. Out of all eleven teachers, four of them preferred fluency, three preferred pronunciation and the others answered

they preferred both or nothing. Mr Sarka had an interesting point as he mentioned that pronunciation needed time to be learned and the pupils should be taught the same way as babies whose mother language is English.

The next question was about the preferred methods of pronunciation practice. A lot of teachers wrote that they practice pronunciation in a playful way, using dialogues or drills.

In the last question, the teachers were asked if they were satisfied with the principles of their system, or if they would change something. All the teachers from the Waldorf schools were completely satisfied, one teacher from Montessori said that he could not say the principle of Montessori was perfect and some teachers from public schools would prefer small changes in their educational approach.

7.4 Data analysis

Tables and graphs are used to present a clear analysis of the data from the observations. Each criteria has its own table and graph, which show the summary of it in every school that was observed. The inspection arch that was used for the observations can be seen in Appendix A. The first two criteria show the teachers' usage of English in the lessons and focus on phonetics in classes and are marked with points from 1 to 10, 10 being the best assessment. The third criterion shows the chosen teaching method, and every point is given for a method used in longer durations in the class. As the number of observations in every school differ, there cannot be an objective result, but the tables and graphs can show the possible preferences of the school systems.

7.4.1 The teachers' usage of English

Table 1 - The table shows the intensity of usage of English during the lessons (range 0 – 10, 10 is the highest)

The teachers' usage of English						
the course of the class	ZŠ Montessori Plzeň	ZŠ Montessori Liberec	Waldorfská škola Dobromysl	Waldorfská škola Semily	26. ZŠ Plzeň	ZŠ Dobřany
introduction	10	8	10	9	6,5	4,7
main part	10	7	8,8	7	6,5	3,5
conclusion	10	7	9,5	5	2,5	3,7

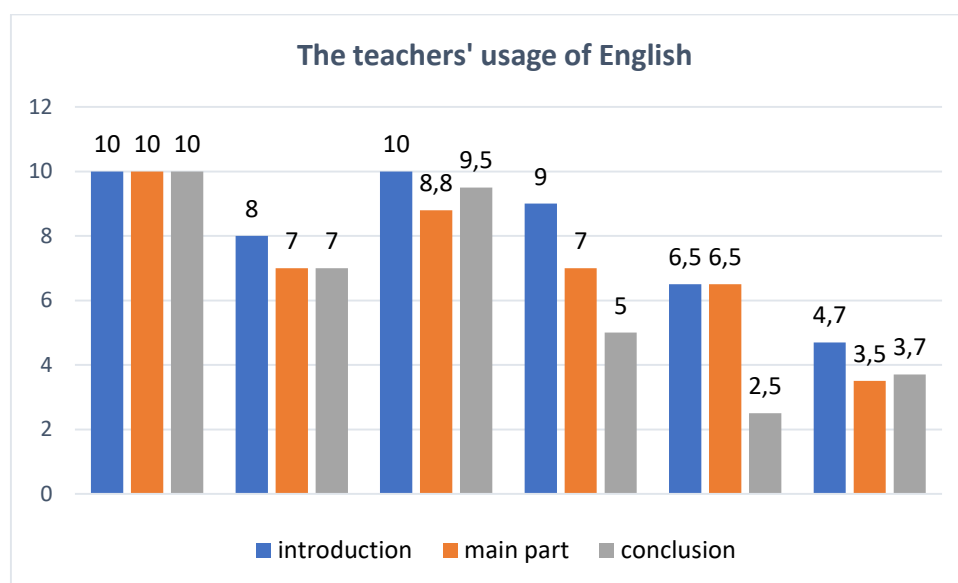


Figure 1 - The comparison of the results of teachers usage of English in observed schools

In every school system, the teachers communicated differently with their pupils. The biggest difference was between the alternative and the public schools, where the teachers had lower results. Even though they tried to communicate in English with their pupils, they still spoke Czech a lot. The reason for using Czech was mainly to save time, or they believed the pupils would not understand them and become confused. After giving instructions in English, they often repeated them in Czech, but they also gave the instructions in Czech without saying it in English first. Contrary to public schools, the two Montessori schools have a bit different results. In both schools there was a native English speaker, but in the Montessori in Pilsen, the teacher could not speak Czech, so he had no opportunity to switch to Czech. The

teachers in Liberec's Montessori spoke English with their pupils a lot, but when there was a difficult situation, they switched to Czech in order to solve it quickly. As a whole, the Waldorf schools had a very high result, which may support the fact that in the Waldorf school, the classes are based on rhythmic exercises, songs and comprehension in the first grade. In Dobromysl, teachers only used Czech in very difficult situations, such as discipline. In Semily, grammar was explained in one class, so the teacher had to use Czech more than usual.

7.4.2 Focus on phonetics

Table 2 - The table shows teacher's focus on phonetics during the lessons (range 0 – 10, 10 is the highest)

Focus on phonetics						
the course of the class	ZŠ Montessori Plzeň	ZŠ Montessori Liberec	Waldorfská škola Dobromysl	Waldorfská škola Semily	26. ZŠ Plzeň	ZŠ Dobřany
introduction	3	6,5	10	10	3,5	2,2
main part	7	5	7,8	9	6	2,7
conclusion	4	2,5	5,6	7	5,5	2,5

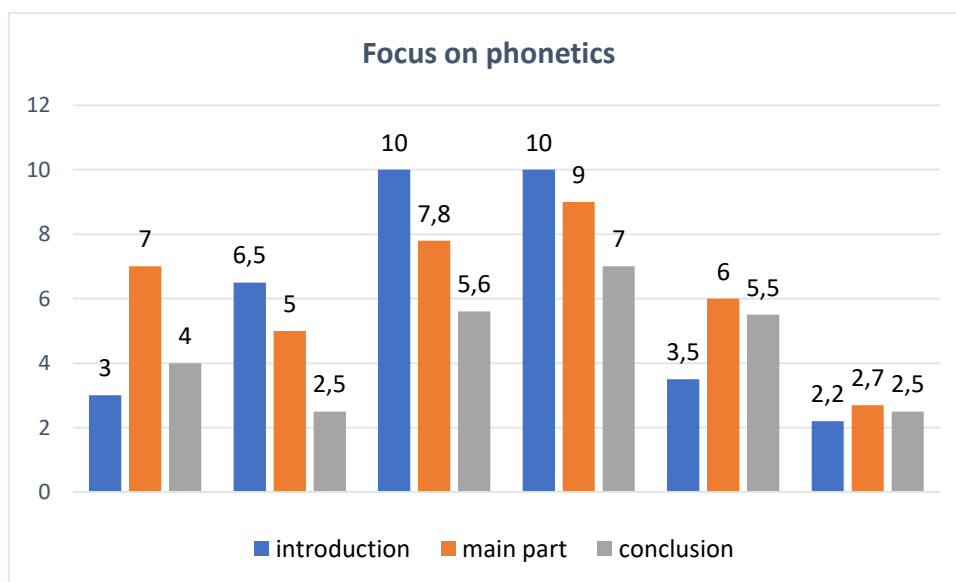


Figure 2 - The comparison of the results of teachers' focus on phonetics during the lessons

From all the observed classes in základní škola Dobřany, there was only one lesson when the teacher had special exercises on phonetics. Alternatively, teachers

sometimes corrected the pupils' pronunciation. On the other hand, the teachers in 26. Základní škola used exercises for pronunciation or intonation a lot as they included a lot of songs, spelling and other games that were focused on phonetics into the lessons. As Montessori includes individual work into the lessons a lot, the focus on phonetics may be a bit difficult. The teachers corrected the pupil's pronunciation during conversation or activities at the beginning or at the end of the lesson. As mentioned before, the Waldorf school focuses on rhythmic games and activities, so the phonetics practice is very intensive during the lessons. The teachers always began and ended the lesson with a song or a poem, and in the third class, the lessons in both schools were based on singing and recitation the whole time.

7.4.3 Teaching methods

Table 3 - The table shows the teaching methods the teachers used during the lessons

Teaching methods						
	ZŠ Montessori Plzeň	ZŠ Montessori Liberec	Waldorfská škola Dobromysl	Waldorfská škola Semily	26. ZŠ Plzeň	ZŠ Dobřany
working with text	0	2	0	0	0	0
conversation	2	2	6	1	1	5
controlled discussion	2	4	0	0	0	0
demonstration methods	0	0	1	1	0	2
activating methods	0	0	5	1	1	5
complex method	0	0	0	0	2	1
group work	0	0	1	0	1	2
individual work	5	6	5	2	1	0

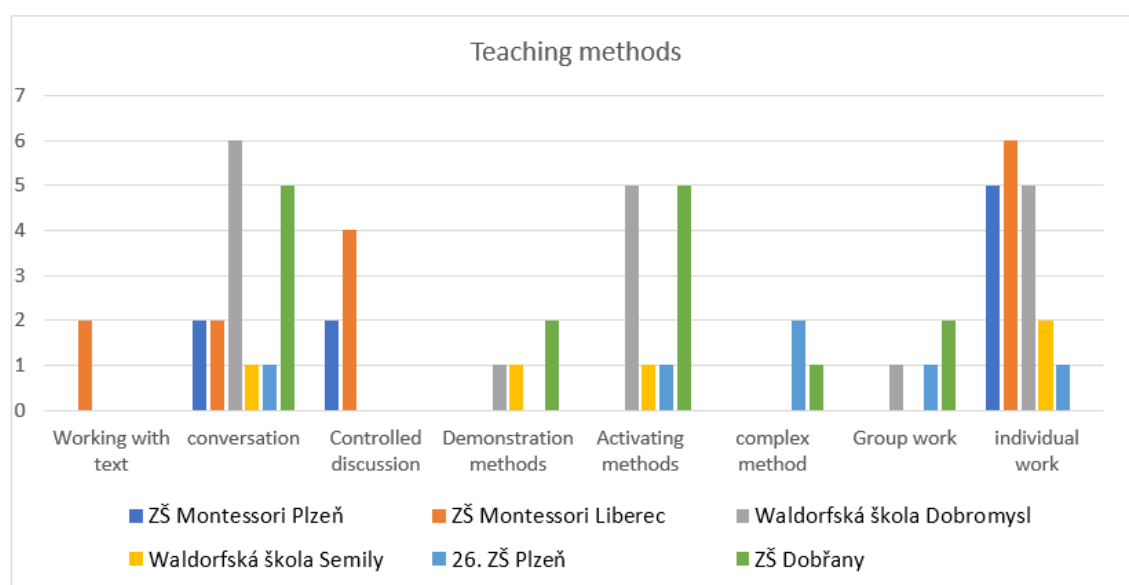


Figure 3 - The comparison of teachers' usage of teaching methods in English lessons

Due to the principles of all the observed schools, the teachers' teaching methods are diverse. The school that differed from the others the most is Montessori. The reason for this is that the lessons are mainly based on individual work and controlled discussion. From all the seven observed classes, no teacher used an activating method or group work. On the other hand, Waldorf schools used activating methods and conversation the most, which is also connected to the fact that the basis

of their teaching are rhythmic exercises in the first grade. It is very positive that public schools used the widest variety of teaching methods, but sometimes it was not that effective as they used a lot of Czech throughout the classes.

Conclusion

In this bachelor thesis, the concept of alternative schools and their functions were introduced, followed by the Waldorf and Montessori education systems and their main principles. A description of current Montessori and Waldorf schools was included. To ensure a better understanding of the practical applications section, the last point mentioned in the section on theory were the curriculums of these educational approaches.

The target of the part on practical applications was to present the main differences in the educational approaches of Montessori schools, Waldorf schools and public schools in the Czech Republic. The research consisted of teacher interviews and observations in the English classes.

The principles and the description from the section on theory corresponded with the observations. However, there was a lot of new information I found out which I did not have access to before. When I interviewed the teachers I discovered some interesting facts. Firstly, Montessori teachers said that there was no Montessori curriculum for teaching English in the Czech Republic. They said a curriculum for teaching English in Montessori existed, but it was intended for the children whose mother language is English. In contrast to Montessori, the teachers at Waldorf school may follow the Waldorf curriculum “Richter”, which describes teaching English as a foreign language from the first to the twelfth year of Waldorf education. Also, some teachers at the public schools claimed they spoke English in the classes as much as possible, but when they were observed, they used English very little or not at all. Another interesting fact is that one teacher said that in the Waldorf school, pupils were aware of the grammar explanations from the sixth class. The grammar was explained in the first grade as well, but they learned it subconsciously and terminology was not

used. What is also important to mention is that every Montessori school differed, as they do not have very strict principles to follow. A good example are the Montessori schools in Pilsen and Liberec, which both used different ways of teaching English. Mr Holden, a teacher in Montessori, said the pupils had an English day once a week, and the English teachers join the other classes and help the pupils with Czech subjects in English throughout the whole week. In the Liberec school, there were always around twenty pupils in the classes. On the other hand, as Mr Sarka said, pupils from the Montessori in Pilsen had an English lesson once a week. They had other subjects on the other days, which were taught in English for thirty minutes every day. This means that when they had mathematics, they went to an English room in small groups of around four to eight pupils and had mathematics in English for thirty minutes.

The criteria that were observed in the lessons showed some of the main differences in all the systems. The teachers' usage of English showed that the teachers at Waldorf schools, which had similar results, used English very intensively, as they all introduced and concluded the lesson with a rhythmic exercise. The majority of Waldorf teachers used rhythmic exercises the whole time, and two of them played a musical instrument. On the other hand, the Montessori schools had dissimilar results, which seems to support the fact that Montessori principles offer the teacher freedom, and are based mainly on individual work. The public schools had the lowest results, which may support the fact that English is not taught in every public school from the first class, so the teaching progress may be a bit slower.

The focus on phonetics during the classes again showed that Montessori prefers individual work, which decreases the possibility of practicing conversation. However, the beginning and concluding sessions of the classes were conducted on the ellipse, which were sometimes used to practise pronunciation with the help of drill exercises

or games. The focus on pronunciation in public schools was very low. Unfortunately, it was supported by the low amount of spoken English in the classes. The teachers corrected the pupils' pronunciation while speaking, but exercises directed to practice pronunciation were not used very often. As mentioned above, Waldorf teachers concentrated on phonetics very intensively. The poems and songs they used were focused on specific topics. They also combined movement with recitation and singing. Teachers sometimes used their musical instruments sometimes, and they never used a computer or radio during the classes.

Even though there was not same amount of observations in all schools, from the results of the third criterion, the teaching method, it can be recognized what methods each educational approach prefers. As the Montessori uses a lot of individual work in classes, the pupils have more freedom to develop their individual skills, but speaking is a bit limited in this method. A very interesting side note is that pupils from the fifth class in Montessori were able to read an English book and do a report about it. In contrast to the other schools, the preferred methods in public schools differ a lot. Frequently changing methods helped to keep the pupils focused and motivated. The classes in the Waldorf schools were mainly based on communication or activating methods. At Waldorf, pupils did not sit at their desks, but worked together on the carpet.

On the basis of the research, it can be concluded that according to their principles, the approaches of the English classes in the schools differ considerably. Every educational approach has various preferences which can gradually decrease performance in some important aspects in foreign language teaching, but can also be very effective in other important areas. However, if the public is aware of the

differences the methods offer, they can easily form their own opinion according to what they consider the most effective.

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Appendix A

Inspection record

date: _____

school (Institution): _____

grade / age group: _____

topic: _____

Learning material:

Characteristics of school and surroundings:

Pupils characteristics:

Class timetable	The teachers' usage of English	Teaching methods	Focus on phonetics	Notes

Interview with the teacher

name:

study:

How long time are you actively teaching? How long in Montessori/ Waldorf school?

What is the basis of your organization for the school year?

Do you prefer any specific methods? Which?

Do you find using a textbook in the class important? What for?

To which extent do you find the communication with your pupils in English only effective?

What is more important for you, the pupils' fluency or accurate pronunciation?

Which methods do you prefer for practicing pronunciation?

Are you completely satisfied with the principles of education system you are teaching in, or is there something you would like to do differently?
